

A PTA/PTSA Graduation/Prom Night event is coordinated by a committee whose chair is an appointed or elected member of the executive board. The committee members can include other members of the board, the principal, a faculty member, the president (ex officio) and other PTA members appointed by the president. The major responsibility of this committee is to provide a safe, healthy, legal and supervised recreational event for students in cooperation with the community. A secondary responsibility may be to raise necessary funds to host the event.

What to Consider

Some issues for a committee to consider when planning any graduation or prom night activity follow.

Activities

- Are inexpensive, involve many members and students, and are
- Do not involve commercial or advertising obligations.
- Do not conflict with other PTA, school or community events.
- Create goodwill for PTA in the community.

Safety

- PTA must ensure that young people are under proper adult supervision when participating in PTA activities, and that correct safety and security procedures are always followed. (See References at the end of this worksheet for further sources of information.)
- Parents and students must be made aware of the risks involved in hiring limousine, charter bus or van services that may have no insurance coverage, unlicensed drivers and/or provide alcoholic beverages. Contact local offices of the Public Utilities Commission to verify the licenses of these services.
- When school district buses are used for the events, the school district safety procedures must be followed.

Health

- Health issues can differ according to the location and organization of an event. Organized events at theme parks or recreational areas — where added supervision is provided and food is catered by professionals — create fewer problems than those that are self-catered and supervised by local sponsors.

- Every event must be drug-, alcohol-, and smoke-free. Careful consideration must be given to food handling, restroom facilities, rest areas and availability of personnel certified in first aid and CPR.

Legal Issues

- When undertaking an event or activity, local ordinances regarding large group assembly permits, fire safety and health regulations must be obeyed. The school district, district PTA, city and county agencies must be consulted for specific directions.
- “Parents’ Approval, Student, Family, and Participant Waiver” form should be completed for each student participant. (See California State PTA *Insurance Guide*.)
- It is illegal for a person under the age of 18 to participate in any form of gambling (including casino activities).

Transportation

In situations where PTA sponsors activities and secures transportation, such as “Grad Night” (hereinafter referred to as “events”), the PTA must provide accessible transportation at no additional cost to students with mobility disabilities in compliance with the requirements set forth in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Local PTA units shall coordinate with their local school and/or school district to obtain current lists of accessible transportation providers if such lists exist. Questions from PTA units, districts or councils regarding a request for accessible transportation should first be directed to the school district.

When local PTA units secure transportation for participating students for events, local PTA units must comply with the ADA which does not permit services that are different or separate from that provided to other individuals without disabilities, unless such action is necessary to provide an individual with a disability or class of such individuals with a good, service, facility, privilege, advantage, or accommodation or other opportunity that is as effective as that provided to others.

If the local PTA unit secures accessible transportation to events, as described above, and it fails to arrive, the PTA shall make every reasonable effort to secure alternative accessible transportation to enable students with mobility disabilities to still attend. In no instance shall a local PTA unit inform students with mobility disabilities that they must secure their own transportation.

A student with a disability who requires a one-to-one aide as part of his or her Individualized Education Program (“IEP”) shall be permitted to attend any PTA event with his or her aide, as the student’s family deems

necessary. Further, no fee shall be charged for any PTA event ticket for the student's aide. For any event where a student requires an aide, the cost of the aide's transportation shall be borne by the PTA. PTA may ask to be reimbursed by the event venue, affiliated school and/or school district.

PTA Insurance

When planning PTA events and activities you must always refer to the *Insurance Guide* that is updated annually. If you have any questions or concerns about the event contact the California State PTA insurance broker. **Never sign a Hold Harmless Agreement on behalf of the PTA.** If the PTA is asked to sign a Hold Harmless Agreement for any reason, the PTA should contact the California State PTA insurance broker. When directed by the insurance broker to sign the "Facilities Use Permit Addendum" for events held on public school campuses, locate the form in the *Toolkit*, Forms Tab. Contact information for the California State PTA insurance broker may be obtained in the Insurance Guide.

- The PTA/PTSA association must vote to sponsor the program each year. The results of the vote must be recorded in the minutes of the association.
- Ensure adequate insurance coverage when planning a graduation or prom night activity by contacting the California State PTA insurance broker. A list of covered PTA activities and requirements is included in the California State PTA *Insurance Guide*.
- Insurance company-prohibited activities are not allowed. These prohibited activities can threaten the safety, health and welfare of children. (Refer to California State PTA *Insurance Guide*.)
 - A "Certificate of Insurance" must be provided by PTA if requested by the school district. (Contact the PTA insurance broker.)
- Follow Contractor/Vendor Requirements in the Insurance Guide.
- The PTA may not join another non-PTA organization or group for the purpose of conducting a graduation or prom night activity. The PTA insurance coverage must not be authorized or used for any event **not** sponsored by the PTA. Prior to cosponsoring an activity or event with another group, refer to PTA Policies," Cooperation With Other Organizations".

PTA Unit Procedures

- The event and all related work and/or fundraising activity must be approved by the executive board and the association and formally recorded in the minutes of the association. All money raised or derived from the event or associated activities shall be deposited in the unit treasury. No funds shall be expended by the chair, subcommittee chairs, or committee members without approval of the executive board and association. All contracts must be signed by elected officers, one of whom shall be

the president, following approval by the executive board and association.

- The president appoints the Graduation/Prom Night Committee, subject to ratification by the executive board.
- The graduation or prom night activity committee must follow the "Guidelines on the Use of Committees," in the PTA Toolkit.

PTA Finances

A PTA sponsoring or co-sponsoring a graduation or prom night activity must follow these procedures in all financial transactions.

- A PTA does not raise money for other organizations, nor does it allow its Internal Revenue Service Employer Identification Number (EIN) to be used by another organization. It is vital to remember that the nonprofit status of PTA is determined by how funds are earned as well as how they are spent. PTA units that engage in extensive fundraising activities, not associated with their primary purposes, may have to pay a tax on any unrelated business income.
- Refer to the Finance Chapter, under the following subjects for further information.

What to Do

- Establish a budget for the event, including all activities of the subcommittees. Submit this budget for approval by the association. Determine the revenue sources for the event. (See Standards for PTA Fundraising.)

Remember, plans for any proposed fundraising project must be presented to the association for approval and must be recorded in the minutes. If specified, the net profit must be spent for the purpose(s) for which it was raised.

- The committee is a part of the association and must operate within the framework of the PTA bylaws, policies and procedures.
- Clear date(s) with school and community calendars; reserve needed facilities and equipment.
- Obtain any required permits well in advance of the event. Notify local police, fire and/or health departments as required.
- Secure a "Parents' Approval, Student, Family, and Participant Waiver" form for each student participant, if required. (See California State PTA *Insurance Guide* and Graduation/Prom Night Guidelines.)
 - Remember, contracts must be approved by the association and signed by the president and one other elected officer of the PTA/PTSA executive board.
 - Follow Contractor/Vendor Requirements in the Insurance Guide
- For funds received from ticket sales or fundraising activity, it is essential that at least two people count

the money together. Funds (money) should never be handled by one person alone. Money should be counted by the Graduation/Prom Night Committee Chair and the unit treasurer or financial secretary. The treasurer (or financial secretary) should issue a receipt for all money received and deposit the funds in a PTA/PTSA bank account.

- Itemized bills, sales receipts, etc., are given to the treasurer for payment by check. ALL BILLS ARE PAID BY CHECK. NEVER PAY ANY BILLS WITH CASH. The final accounting is given to the association and filed for financial review.
- Keep accurate records of charitable (cash and in-kind) donations received with any donor information required, and promptly forward to the treasurer. The treasurer shall issue an acknowledgement to donors following appropriate substantiation and disclosure requirements found in California State PTA *Toolkit*, Tax Filing.
- A small amount of funds approved by the executive board (not exceeding the amount authorized in the bylaws), if needed, may be advanced for deposits or other supplies/expenses before the event. Receipts are required to reconcile all advanced funds.

The chair is responsible for submitting, at each monthly executive board meeting, a written report which includes a financial accounting of all the monies received and disbursed, donations received and activities planned

After the Event

- Complete an inventory of supplies and equipment related to the activity, establish a location to store reusable equipment. Determine if the value of stored materials warrants property insurance coverage.
- Reconcile all advanced funds and submit any outstanding bills promptly.
- Hold a committee meeting to evaluate the event.
- Conduct a student survey.
- Collect written reports from subcommittee chair and prepare a report for the association and procedure book.
- Prepare a report of activities, evaluation and suggestions to successor for procedure book.

References and Resources

- *Bylaws for Local PTA/PTSA Units*
- *California State PTA Toolkit*, capta.org
- *California State PTA Insurance Guide*
- *Attorney General's Guide for Charit*